

CHARISMATIC AND EVANGELICAL LEADERS MEET WITH THE POPE

October 10, 1995 (David Cloud, Fundamental Baptist Information Service, P.O. Box 610368, Port Huron, MI 48061, 866-295-4143, fbns@wayoflife.org) -

Charismatic Pat Robertson (Christian Broadcasting Network), Chuck Colson (Prison Fellowship Ministries), Don Argue (president, National Association of Evangelicals), and Bill Bright (Campus Crusade for Christ) were among the religious leaders who met with Pope John Paul II during his visit to New York City, October 7, 1995.

The group included five Muslim leaders and 27 Protestant and Orthodox representatives. The "Protestants" included Edmond Browning, presiding bishop of the Episcopal Church. Another group of 25 Jewish leaders met with the pope separately. Both meetings were held at Catholic Cardinal John O'Connor's residence. Each member of the group spoke briefly with the pope.

Joan Campbell, general secretary of the National Council of Churches, was one of the participants. She said she and Robertson made arrangements to meet again.

In a telephone interview with The Associated Press, Robertson said of the pope: "He's got great humility and spirituality; that's what people admire about him."

The New York Times reported: "Overall, Mr. Robertson said the spirit of the meeting was one of interreligious unity. 'There was a real sense of harmony,' he said. 'We all admire the Holy Father tremendously. We all want to build bridges with the Catholic Church.'"

CHRISTIAN COALITION STARTING CATHOLIC BRANCH

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Pat Robertson's Christian Coalition, which is a political action organization, has announced the formation of a new, Roman Catholic arm.

Executive Director Ralph Reed said: "We are calling it a project or auxiliary of the Christian Coalition. We're doing it to bridge-build, we're doing it to reach out to Catholics" (New York Times, October 7, 1995).

The Catholic Alliance, as it is to be called, will have its own newsletter and its staff will hold regional meetings. But it will not have a separate national structure. Its headquarters, opening

Monday, will be within the coalition's Capitol Hill offices. Furthermore, those who join will be "automatically members of the Christian Coalition," Mr. Reed said (New York Times).

A month ago, the 1.7 million-member Christian Coalition released the results of an internal poll showing that 16 percent of its members, more than 250,000 people, are Catholics. Mr. Reed said his goal is to raise that to 25 percent by next year's Presidential election.

We believe this type of political ecumenical is very dangerous for Bible-believing churches. God's people can vote and be politically active citizens without joining forces with the enemies of the Gospel. It is confusion.